



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**KYRGYZ REPUBLIC**

## SUCCESS STORY

### Building the Capacity to Communicate

**USAID trains Kyrgyz health care workers in interpersonal communication to aid their work with marginalized populations**



***“I can assure you that these trainings make a difference. For example, Svetlana, an HIV patient, now visits me not like a doctor but like her sister. She tells me about her problems and leaves me with a smile and positive energy.”***

*—Damira Osmonalieva  
Family Doctor, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan*

According to the World Health Organization and UNAIDS, Kyrgyzstan has one of the fastest growing rates of HIV infection in the world. With such a rapidly increasing epidemic, it is vital that patients feel comfortable going to their doctors for testing and treatment. Unfortunately, stigma and discrimination directed at people living with HIV can dissuade patients from entering the health care system. In order to help health care providers better serve populations that are at high-risk of contracting HIV, the USAID Quality Health Care Project is working with physicians and nurses in Kyrgyzstan to improve their interpersonal communication and counseling skills.

Since beginning work in Kyrgyzstan, the Quality Health Care Project has conducted 15 training seminars for 77 nurses and doctors at three health care facilities, which serve a large number of patients who are at high-risk of contracting HIV. Following the trainings, the Quality Project's staff provides participants with regular mentoring to continue increasing their capacity to communicate effectively with high-risk populations.

These trainings have been so successful in Kyrgyzstan that the Kyrgyz State Medical Institute for Retraining and Continuing Education has adopted the curriculum into its course of study for family doctors and nurses.

Damira Osmonalieva, a physician in Bishkek has seen the impact of the training on her own practice. “I have worked about 30 years as a primary health care physician. If I compare my performance prior to the trainings with my current performance, I realize that establishing contact with patients using interpersonal communication skills is responsible for half of a patient's treatment success. It is good indeed when patients are satisfied; they trust you, feel needed and that somebody cares for and helps them.”

USAID and its partners hope for just these sorts of results. With interpersonal communication skills, health care workers in Kyrgyzstan are more prepared than ever to connect with their patients, and thereby achieve better health outcomes.